

# New Partnership Gives Second Chance to Horses

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Al C. Parke, Superintendent welcomes the Horses to Putnamville

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Commissioner J. David Donahue

Indianapolis, Indiana - (May 10, 2007) - Six horses arrived at the Putnamville Correctional Facility today. The facility is implementing a Thoroughbred Horse Retirement Program which will expand to include approximately fifty horses in the near future. The Thoroughbred Horse Retirement Program was developed to end needless abuse and slaughter of race horses by providing humane, viable rescue programs including permanent retirement and private adoption for Thoroughbreds at the end of their racing careers. The THR program will afford horses new careers through rehabilitation and retraining leading to placement in qualified handicapped and other therapeutic riding programs.

"Not only will adoption be an alternate for the re-trained horses, but, the program will also facilitate a vocational training program for the offender population," said Commissioner J. David Donahue.

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The relationship with state correctional institutions has been a unique aspect of the THR mission. The terms of this unique partnership, in exchange for land use, labor and certain materials at the sites, allow THR to design, staff and maintain a vocational program in equine care and management for offenders at the institution.

The general public and racing fans are unaware of the sad fate that awaits thousands of Thoroughbred horses each year. In the racing industry of the nearly 40,000 foals registered annually, about one- third will never appear on a race track. Of those that do, fewer than 25 percent of the fillies and mares, and less than 10 percent of the males, will have breeding careers. Current economics dictate that that among all owners, no matter how responsible and well- intended, only a relative few are capable of maintaining even a single Thoroughbred once it is unable to earn it's keep on the track, which in many cases, lead to severe neglect of the horses at the hands of owners.

"It's been a long process and without the support of Commissioner Donahue we would not be in a position to offer viable placement for the horses. This is a win-win situation, for both the horses and the offenders," said Superintendent Al Parke.

"Governor Daniels continually promotes innovative programming ideas for the offenders of Indiana," added Donahue. "Putnamville Correctional Staff has taken on the challenge of developing a new partnership with THR to help offenders gain new skills, while giving the thoroughbreds a second chance."

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**About The Department of Correction**

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers. The Department's home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department's Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.